

RUSSIAN SPY ADMITS GUILT

Noted Editor and Historian Forces Masquerading Revolutionist to Confess

ABOUT four years ago Vladimir Bourtsch, the Russian editor and historian, who is known as the Sherlock Holmes of the Russian revolution, unmasked one of the greatest traitors in history, Eugene Azeff.

For many years Azeff was at the head of the Russian revolutionary organization, planning numerous terrorist acts and fighting the organized forces of the czar by the same methods of terrorism. He planned and organized most of the sensational assassinations, such as the murder of the czar, Grand Duke Sergius, and the Minister of the Interior, Von Plehve. He was even organizing a plot against the life of the czar when it was discovered by Bourtsch that Azeff was an agent provocateur in the employ of the Russian government.

While Azeff was instigating the revolutionists to commit acts of violence he was betraying them to the Russian secret police. He sent many of his friends to the gallows and to the dungeons of Siberia.

At one time Azeff was at the head of the Russian secret police and at the head of

they tried Bourtsch for discrediting their able leader.

Bourtsch kept searching for evidence that would convince even those who believed blindly in the revolutionary activities of the traitor. Finally he succeeded in convincing the central committee of the party. At the trial Azeff was trapped. He asked to be permitted to go home for the purpose of getting certain documents by which he said that he could prove his innocence. He disappeared. Since then nothing was known of his whereabouts.

There were rumors that he was in Russia, still retaining his post in the secret police department. The Russian government denied this, though the former Premier, the late M. Stolypin, defended Azeff in the Duma and spoke of him as one of his "co-workers." Azeff remained a psychological puzzle even to those who knew him intimately. His wife declared to the revolutionists that she had never suspected his relations with the police department. His son, a schoolboy, it is said, committed suicide because his schoolmates constantly reminded him that his father was a traitor.

Now comes the sensational news that

he was becoming a legendary person whose name seemed to be the most pernicious seeker, but personally I always kept the hope of some day reaching the whole truth of this affair. I had always even a vague presentiment that Azeff himself would not escape me and that this man who hid himself from the whole world would reveal himself to me some day. My presentiment was right. The day has come.

Some time ago it would serve no purpose to be more exact in my recollections. The place where he was hiding, in full security as he imagined, and his complete description. But, convinced as I was that I was on his track, I resolved not even to try and surprise him unawares.

I wrote to the address given me, telling him I knew his name and hiding place and so could inform the revolutionary party, but that I, as a historian and newspaper writer, wished to see him in order to obtain full light on his story. I proposed a meeting, promising to go to it alone and assuring him that it was not a trap. Three days later I received a registered letter, on the envelope of which I at once recognized Azeff's handwriting. The letter read:

"Your proposal is accepted. I agree with my own desire, which I have felt for a long time, to throw the light upon my case. Will you meet me at Frankfurt-on-Main on August 15? It is fully understood that I also will not appear there for you. As for the place of meeting I will fix it in a letter, addressed poste restante at Frankfurt."

I said nothing to any one about the matter and only taking one precaution by leaving with a friend and a second envelope Azeff's letter and a few words of explanation. I reached Frankfurt on August 15, where I found the promised letter at the post office with this address: "N. W. 75." It indicated to me the hour and place for the meeting, the afternoon at the great Bristol cafe.

On my arrival the cafe was crowded. My eyes searched in vain for the man I could consider as my most implacable enemy, who must be eager for my death after the revelations I had made about him. But suddenly in the hall behind the bar a man rose, tall and sturdy, and fixed his gaze on me.

I recognized Azeff, although he had made some changes in his appearance. As I approached him he supported himself with his hands on the table, his head down, bending over as if he wished to make himself smaller, as if he felt himself crushed under I know not what weight. After a moment's awkwardness, easily understood, I said what my feelings were at this moment and during the whole interview the conversation began.

"No one knows of my journey. I have come quite alone," I began, repeating what I had written to him to reassure him. "I am here alone also."

Our eyes met, his avoided mine; they were the eyes of a tracked beast.

"Then let us talk. Here we have nothing to fear. Nobody will hear us and nobody will understand us."

"In fact," Azeff began again, "I could not come otherwise than all alone. Since the night I fled from Paris I have seen no one, neither of the Okhrana (the Russian

political police) nor of the party. I have often read in the papers that I was supposed to be still in the service of the Okhrana. It is false. I have never returned to Russia. You are the first person I have met without hiding my identity."

The first to unmask him, I am the first to see him without a mask. And at once Azeff told me of what he hoped from this meeting.

"Everything that has been written about me, my personality and my deeds have been presented under a false light," he said. "I cannot die without the truth being made known. I owe that to my children. They have a right to know what their father was. When he spoke the words 'my children' his face changed, his voice became soft and tender."

Many a time in our conversation he returned to the subject of his children and every time he seemed to me to be listening, across his words, to sobs repressed and restrained by force. I understood that this man of terror now thought only of his children and saw nothing in the world but them.

"I want," he continued, "my comrades to judge me. I will bring them proofs in support of all I say. I have never been an Okhranist (member of the political police) and I have always despised and hated all those connected with the Okhrana. All that I have done I have done for the revolution."

"I made a blunder in fleeing from Paris. An explanation with my comrades would have sufficed to put matters in their proper position. But I could not. I was ashamed. I was full of remorse. For I knew that I had blood on my hands."

"You mean?" I interrupted him. "Well, listen to me. In 1905, without meaning to or without attaching great importance to it, I mentioned to Gen. Gerasimov the name of Rasputin. She was watched, the plot was discovered and she was hanged."

Had he forgotten that five more revolutionaries were hanged on the gallows with her? He said nothing about them, just as if he had only the death of Rasputin, a mother with two children, to his account.

However, he continued his story, or rather his confession; he recounted all his life from the distant days, when, still young, as a university student, he offered his services to the police as an informer at fifty rubles (2500 francs) a month. And his tale even led him to confess other treacheries, many in number and frightful.

And he explained to me that it was necessary to betray some in order to save others, that it was necessary to wreck some plots, above all those outside his own party, to bring to a successful issue those conducted and organized by himself, such as the attacks on Von Plehve, the Grand Duke Sergius and Admiral Dvobassoff.

"The police," he said, "had blind faith in me. I took advantage of it, fooling them very often, only sacrificing anything about which it was impossible to keep silence and hide."

Our conversation lasted over four hours, when I could stand no more. We interrupted it and resumed it a second time and yet a third time on the following day.

He told me all his life, in his own way, he understood, but promising to produce proofs if needed. And as a commencement, in support of his statement that he had left the police since the day he was unmasked, he showed me letters of Betayev, former director of the Russian police at Paris; from Gerasimov, former director of the political police at St. Petersburg, etc.

"I wish to be judged," he repeated. "I wish it for my children. I accept the verdict whatever it may be. If it is a verdict of death I will execute the sentence myself."

Before leaving he confessed that on deciding to see me, without, however, feeling any fear, he had judged it prudent to make his will. He showed it to me. It began "In case of my death," and showed that he was about to have an interview with me and gave the circumstances under which he had agreed to meet me. Then followed

the arrangements about his children and his fortune.

This led him to speak of money. He had begun by receiving 30 rubles. This was soon raised to 100 a month (\$50), then to \$200 and finally to \$300. But while he spoke of it he kept his head down and his eyes hidden. He could hardly speak the words, the figures seemed to strangle him. He had difficulty in restraining the emotion which shook him and in keeping back his tears.

Mr. Franklin, the Paris correspondent of the New York Daily Forward, interviewed Vladimir Bourtsch after the publication of his account of the meeting with Azeff. To him Bourtsch said:

"I cannot as yet speak of all the details of

our meeting. I must first discuss the matter with our older comrades and with the representatives of the Social Revolutionary party. I am going to England for the purpose of discussing the affair with Krapotkin. Then I shall see Savinkov, Chernov and Lopukhin. The affair is by far more terrible than you can imagine."

"My plans about Azeff? I cannot tell you that just now. My impression is that he is sincere. He told that he is ready to die right now; he has prepared a letter stating that no one should be blamed for his death. And he showed me that letter."

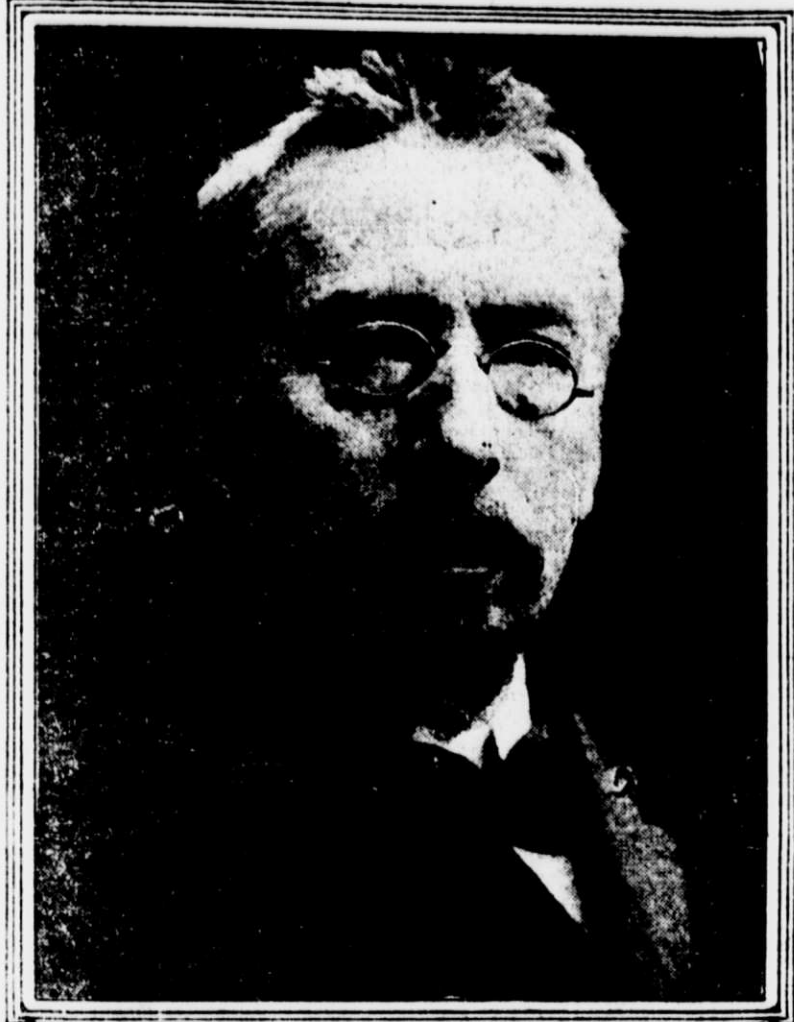
"I am also convinced that he was not in Russia after he was exposed. I could see that from the letters he had from Gerasimov, Betayev and others, who kept calling him to Russia."

"In one of these letters Gerasimov, the head of the secret police department, wrote him: 'Come at once, without any further delay. We must have you here without fail. We must do something to Lopukhin—and then to Bourtsch!'"

"In another letter Gerasimov wrote: 'Why don't you come? We need you here. If you want 10 or 20 or 30 or 100 thousand rubles you can get it. But come at once! But Azeff refused to go to Russia. He confessed that he was afraid.'"

"I did not go to Russia," declared Azeff, "because I felt certain that as soon as I should cross the frontier I would be lost."

"This meeting with Azeff is a terrible blow to the Russian Government," said Bourtsch. "The Government has good cause to fear Azeff's disclosures."



Vladimir Bourtsch

the social revolutionary organization. Bourtsch made his accusations against Azeff to the revolutionary party, but the leading members had so much faith in their leader that instead of trying Azeff

Bourtsch, the man who exposed Azeff, has met him. To the Sherlock Holmes of the Russian revolution Azeff, the agent provocateur, has made his confession. Bourtsch's own account of the meeting

HERE'S A LONDON SCHOOL ACTUALLY TEACHING THE ENGLISH ACCENT

THAT a London institute has been kept open during the summer to teach Americans the English accent is a recent announcement. Is there not an uncontrollable desire on the part of the true and loyal American to arise in his wrath and expostulate about something or other? And hang it all, he's got a right to! It may not have any effect on the "two hundred American pupils, mostly women," but it may make him feel lots better and give him something to think about besides Lefty Louies and Presidential candidates. And what a lot of all sorts of queries and possibilities come stamping into your cogitation when you pause to consider.

The question immediately arises, Will there be a duty on the brand new English accent? Under what heading will it come, or will it be included among "all articles not otherwise classified," with a sliding scale to be manipulated at the discretion of the authorities, with the punishment made to fit the crime. In other words, should a very bad accent be subjected to the same duty as a "perfectly ripping one, don'tcher know?" Should an accent, found concealed about the person with intent to defraud, be confiscated merely, or could the owner be held on charge of smuggling?

And again, would it not be a still more heinous offence should the returning American put over so perfect an accent that he slides in under the same exemption as those "not residents of the United States?" Would the exemption covering all articles which had been "in actual use for more than one year" apply here—in which case would it not be well to require the owner to present his diploma with exact date on which said accent had been acquired? And likewise to have all accented Americans returning to Europe for the second time who wish to avoid paying twice register said accent at the Custom House before departure?

And again, would the average customs officer be able to pass judgment on the real thing when he heard it? Would it not be well for the Government to send men at their own expense to the London accent dispensary for a course in accents, so that there would always be on hand a corps of trained experts, such as they now have in marbles, textiles, etc.? And just one more—how long would it take the customs officers to accustom themselves to accost the new custom with customary civility?

Of course if it turns out that we've got to have this English accent over here I'm strongly in favor of protection in a general way. But instead of putting it in the category of luxuries, to be enjoyed by the favored few, why couldn't we have a few accentual plants of our own, where it could be within the reach of all at moderate cost? Why not have it put into our public schools and make a bally little Englishman out of every boy from the East Side to Hoboken!

And now that we have arranged for conducting it safely and honorably to our home land, what is this English accent when we have it, in what way is it superior to our own, and what are the reasons

that prompt these "two hundred American pupils, mostly women," to brave the vicissitudes of 4,000 miles of ocean travel to capture it?

Considered microscopically, what most of us think of as the English accent isn't an accent at all, but the tone value that makes you all laugh and laugh with a broad A, instead of the flat A in hat, cat and rat. When you look at it aesthetically,

England mark gives it a new value and a new interest?

And just here is where one of the big dangers lies, for the trouble with Americans we're too zealous. When we start to like a thing very much we're inclined to think the more we get of it the better off we are, which in some instances doesn't follow. Those who believe that the exaggerated vowels of the

not say "fawney" the way they do castles, for what good and sufficient reason Gabriel may one day disclose. They just say "fancy" the way we all did before we took lessons from the local elocution teacher, the way they still do at Fortinora or anywhere.

So in order to learn these delicate subtleties and their likes it is probably well that these "two hundred American pupils,

from which would be elucidated the reason why clerk is called "clark," Derby called "Darby," and a few hundred other kindred things are as they are, I consider that such a course would be highly profitable, whatever the cost. Instances there that many of you have heard, no doubt, but here's hoping that some one will read this who doesn't know about all of them.

like sunburn blisters or parties-sake-skins. If they refer to the way we talk through our noses and dub the month of roses "Joone," and in our "trood" way try to do our "dooty" as well as we can, if this be so, then may a kindly Providence guide them in their efforts. If you don't think you do these things, wait till you've been in London a few days and listen to your own voice piping through the richer, broader, rounder chatter around you, and it'll come back at you with the vim of a Yankee monologue on your "noo" Viennese.

You see, I've been to London; I tried to keep from telling you this, but I can't any longer. I have had my vocal efforts smothered in an amused way that hurt a little, for I knew there was cause, and I have seen the speech that my mother taught me at her knee laid bare and murderously mutilated before my very eyes. And some of these faults I have admitted and some I have battled valiantly for as things dear to the patriot's heart.

Are these cousinly gardeners going to prune us so that we may not "gawse" well go somewhere instead of "think," and may we not still come right in and leave right away if we choose? May we be sick only when our stomach is raising the dickens with us, although we are explicitly told in the English Version that "Peter's wife's mother lay sick of a fever," for those London folks will let you die in the cruellest agony and be nothing worse than merely ill.

And when these "200 American pupils, mostly women," have shed their Americanisms, what are the Englishisms they will get in return, for surely they will not let them go away without a fair exchange. Doubtless they will learn the uselessness of using three words to express your meaning when just one, well chosen, would do instead. When run down from over accents they will be advised to stop in bed for a few days rather than stay. On their way back to the hotel they will likely find that the street has been stopped instead of closed. Should they go to the dentist on their recovery they may be surprised to find that that worthy gentleman does not fill teeth, but merely stops them!

They will learn that the phrases "I beg your pardon," "One moment, please," "Would you allow me to pass by?" "Oh, did I knock you off the pavement? Well, now, what a pity!" are quite superfluous and can be compressed into the simple word "Sorry," with a rich little trill on the "r." "Will you kindly allow me to brush the crumbs from your place." "The fish that you ordered, sir." "Also the potatoes." "And likewise your salad, sir." "And gooseberry tart." "And coffee, sir," they will find can each be announced by the simple two syllable phrase "Thank you." Some class to a language like that, for the English have learned the value of the code, it makes things simpler. No wonder the French shopkeeper hung out his shingle, "English spoken and American understood." It takes lots less time to learn three words than it does to learn fifty.

As I have not been in London since the inception of the new accentorium, I can-

not speak authoritatively on what the curriculum has to offer, but merely in surmises of what it is likely to offer. I am quite sure the student would come home much handicapped did he not have the advantage of a special course in inflection. This thrives most luxuriantly in the upper inner circle of the near knowledge and consists in a series of scales running up and down in lumps and dips like the contour of a roller coaster.

Two such women I heard talking in a London tale one day who had brought the art of inflection to one glorious zenith. Scales and crescendos, hops, skips and immensities were showered about in such inextinguishable fashion that I could with the utmost difficulty wrench out one word in ten. Physiological exercises, such as rolling the eyes, elevating the brows, etc., would of necessity be taught in this branch, where a thirty-third degree diploma should inspire the student to the utmost effort.

Attention would doubtless be given to the contemplation of abstract courtesies as seen in the gruff English expressions, "You may telephone here" and "By desire" on the orchestral numbers instead of "By request." And maybe, possibly perchance—still I doubt it—yet it might be that these kindly pruners would suggest to these "two hundred American pupils, mostly women," the inadvisability of boasting too much about the U. S. A. in the presence of company.

Let them talk as they please about our Americanisms, however, these English folks have a great opinion of our slang. Once when I said I had to "beat it" because a chap who had failed to show up was "just about the limit," my fellow farer rolled the words over luxuriously and made me repeat them again and again until he could get the intricate idioms down pat. They like our nose production too, in an amused sort of way, just as they do our negro talk. It all comes under the head of "picturesque."

Why I have known of Englishmen returning from the States, swanking around among their admiring fellows with their American (twang and their American slang as something acquired quite accidentally, and with a certain pride in these things just as they had in their "noo" American clothes. And all this, mind you, in spite of the "200 American pupils, mostly women." I don't say just what kind of Englishmen they were, but it helps to throw an interesting light on the words "affectation" and "perspective."

Concluding, the account of the London institute says, "we found several com-

they have it on us in the broad vowel game and it is undoubtedly more pleasing to the ear than the flat hat, cat, rat, diction of the central and Western States. But why cross the water for this, when every reputable teacher of diction in our colleges does his level best to tell you about it? Might not the answer be that the "Made in

conventional stage types of Englishmen are good English and direct their efforts accordingly will have another think coming to them when they harken to the talk of cultivated Englishmen, for these cultivated Englishmen have reserve in their vowels as well as their wits. At times they are even whimsical. They do

mostly women," have gone into the thing tooth and nail as they have done. They will learn the true London way of saying no and go like "neow" and "geow" with a relaxed drop of the lower jaw, just as if you'd been suddenly hit in the stomach. If by any chance there should be a chair of logic in the new accentorium I can-

"They tell us," continues the announcement of the London institute, "that the help we give assists them to shed a lot of Americanisms from their vocabulary." And now then, what are these "Americanisms" that our cousins are going to help us shed—good word that "shed," sort of scraping off and sliding out of,



E. Azeff